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General and complete disarmament: convening of the fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament

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Report of the Secretary-General**

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* A/55/150.

** The report contains replies from Member States and its preparation depends upon receipt of such replies.

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I. Introduction

1. On 1 December 1999, the General Assembly adopted resolution 54/54 U, entitled "Convening of the fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament", paragraph 2 of which reads as follows:

> "*Requests* the Secretary-General to seek the views of States Members of the United Nations on the objectives, agenda and timing of the special session and to report to the General Assembly at its fifty-fifth session".

2. Pursuant to that request, the Secretary-General, on 14 March 2000, addressed a note verbale to Member States inviting them to provide information on the subject. The replies received are reproduced in chapter II below. Any other replies received will be issued as addenda to the present report.

II. Replies received from Governments

A. India

[Original: English]
[11 May 2000]

3. India remains committed to the convening of a fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament whose objectives and agenda will review and assess the implementation, as well as reaffirm, the principles and priorities of the Final Document of the first special session devoted to disarmament agreed to by consensus. India believes that the fourth special session, in order to be credible, should focus on the priority issue of nuclear disarmament and put forward a positive and future-oriented programme building on the achievements of the past. This would be possible by reaffirming the principles and priorities agreed to by consensus in the Final Document of the first special session with a view to preserving what has been achieved, evaluating where we stand at the beginning of a new millennium, and defining a programme of action to pursue the unfinished task in the future.

4. India was therefore disappointed that the deliberations of the 1999 substantive session of the Disarmament Commission did not achieve a consensus on the objectives and agenda of the fourth special session.

5. As for the timing of the fourth special session, India believes that in accordance with resolution 54/54 U, it would be meaningful and appropriate to convene the session following the emergence of a consensus on its agenda and objectives.

6. The call for the fourth special session was an Indian initiative at the ministerial meeting of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, held in Cairo in 1994. Since then, India has consistently supported the resolutions of the Movement on the fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. The meeting of Foreign Ministers of Non-Aligned Countries, held in Cartagena, Colombia, in April 2000, reiterating the decision of their Heads of State/Government at the Summit of 1998 held at Durban, South Africa, conveyed their support for convening the fourth special session "to review and assess the implementation of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament while reaffirming its principles and priorities". India fully supports the proposal by the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries and will strive constructively for its realization.

B. Russian Federation

[Original: Russian]
[17 May 2000]

7. The Permanent Mission of the Russian Federation to the United Nations presents its compliments to the Secretary-General of the United Nations and, with reference to the enquiry by the Department for Disarmament Affairs of 14 March 2000 concerning the convening of the fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, has the honour to inform him of the following.

8. From the point of view of the Russian Federation, the main work of the fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament could be to try to comprehend the aims of disarmament at the current stage of world development.

9. In the Russian Federation we are convinced that this forum should conclude with the adoption of important and long-term decisions designed to set the tone for disarmament at the beginning of the new millennium. Such results can be achieved only by

careful preparation of the special session and a calm and businesslike atmosphere during the session, free from sterile polemics and unconstructive and unrealistic approaches. Otherwise there is a danger that this important political event will prove to be as unsuccessful as the two previous special sessions on disarmament. The Russian Federation is prepared to work together with others with a view to establishing appropriate conditions for the holding of the fourth special session.